

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS WITHOUT MARKINGS

Five (5) corrected drawing sheets, properly labeled in the top margin as "Replacement Sheet", with FIGS. 1 through 8 are submitted with this Response to comply with 37 C.F.R. 1.121(d). These sheets replace the existing sheets 1 through 8 which show dark regions objected to in the Office Action.

No annotated drawings are supplied as the only changes are in the shading of certain features.

REMARKS

The last Office Action of August 10, 2006 has been carefully considered. Reconsideration of the instant application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 22-43 are pending in the application. Claims 22, 37, 38 and 43 have been amended. Claim 34 has been canceled. Claims 22-33 and 35-43 remain in the application.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indicated allowability of claim 34 if rewritten in independent form and including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Replacement Drawing Sheets are submitted in compliance with 37 C.F.R. 1.121(d).

A new Abstract is include with this Response.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112

Claim 38 has been amended to more clearly recite that the post has two ends. The term "the oval window" does not require antecedent basis as this is a medical term.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 22, 38 and 43 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102(B) AND §103(A)

To expedite prosecution, Applicant has amended claim 22 to include the limitations of claim 34, which is allowable. All rejected claims now depend from amended claim 22, which is allowable. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35

U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) as well as the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101 and 35 U.S.C. §112 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above presented remarks and amendments, it is respectfully submitted that all claims on file should be considered patentably differentiated over the art and should be allowed.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawing, then it is respectfully requested that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the case to issuance. If the Examiner feels that it might be helpful in advancing this case by calling the undersigned, applicant would greatly appreciate such a telephone interview.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 

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